

**Amendments to the Claims**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

**Listing of Claims:**

1-3 (Cancelled).

4 (Currently Amended). A method for detecting the presence of a target single-stranded nucleic acid in a sample~~hybrid nucleic acid by use of a cationic dye compound,~~ comprising:

~~providing a cationic dye compound comprising a cation group and a chromophore coupled to said cation group, said chromophore having a heteropolycyclic structure containing a nitrogen atom;~~

~~bringing a nucleic acid probe and contacting a sample suspected of containing a target single-stranded nucleic acid into contact with each other a nucleic acid probe that is a DNA fragment or a chemically synthesized DNA comprising a nucleic acid sequence complementary to the target single-stranded nucleic acid, under hybridization conditions, to form~~whereby a double-stranded hybrid nucleic acid composed of said nucleic acid probe and said target nucleic acid ~~will be formed if the target nucleic acid is present in the sample, wherein said nucleic acid probe is a DNA fragment or chemically synthesized DNA comprising a nucleic acid sequence complementary to the target nucleic acid;~~

binding ~~said a~~ cationic dye compound onto ~~said any~~ hybrid nucleic acid formed in said contacting step by adding the cationic dye compound before, during or after said ~~hybridization~~contacting step, wherein said cationic dye compound has the following formula (I):



wherein n denotes 1 to 12, X represents a chromophore having at least four pyrrole rings, Y represents a connecting group or a direct bond between X and Z, and Z represents a cationic functional group, or a functional group whose property is convertible to a cationic property; and

measuring circular dichroism of ~~said any~~ cationic dye compound bound onto ~~said a~~ hybrid nucleic acids, wherein the presence of said circular dichroism indicates that the sample contained target single-stranded nucleic acid.

wherein said cationic dye compound is represented by the following formula (I):



wherein n denotes 1 to 12, X represents a chromophore having at least four pyrrole rings, Y represents a connecting group or a direct bond between X and Z, and Z represents a cationic functional group, or a functional group whose property is convertible to a cationic property

5 (Cancelled).

6 (Previously Presented). The method according to claim 4, wherein said chromophore is selected from the group consisting of porphyrin, porphyrin derivatives, phthalocyanine, and phthalocyanine derivatives.

7 (Currently Amended). The method according to claim 4, further including,  
prior to said contacting step, the step of ~~comprising~~ immobilizing an analyte having said target  
single-stranded nucleic acid or said nucleic acid probe onto a solid phase carrier ~~to bring said~~  
~~analyte and said nucleic acid probe into contact with each other under hybridization conditions.~~

8 (Canceled).